THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF PROGRESS IN RELIGION

DECEMBER 1916

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New York Chicago
San Antonio

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SAN ANTONIO
Needs a Church

OUR church in San Antonio needs a church building—***immediately!***

THIS is not a luxury, but a *necessity*. We have reached the stage where the "hall-attitude" won't do any longer, to make our influence and serviceableness in the city what they ought to be. We are stayed for want of the efficiencies of a permanent church home.

THIS is not a good time to start a building proposition in Texas. The Mexican situation has paralyzed all financial enterprise in these parts.

BUT IT IS A GOOD TIME TO BUILD—economically; and everything that can strengthen our cause in the city *just now* will count prodigiously in the future of our work in all Texas.

THE Southwest needs the sanity of the liberal faith. It is ready to receive it, if vigorously presented.

DOES the whole responsibility of meeting this need rest with the local church? We are doing the BEST we can—but so much more needs to be done than our local "best" makes possible!

THE American Unitarian Association has generously provided us with a lot. We have a thousand dollars accumulated toward a Building Fund, and are pushing sturdily to raise more. Our plans are modest: $5,000 will build to our need and with befitting dignity.

CAN WE HAVE THIS BUILDING NOW?

WE cannot afford *not* to have it now. But we cannot afford to have it now, under present local conditions, unless our friends beyond our borders cooperate with us.

WE would be glad if their faith in us—and in their own free gospel of religious progress—would move them to share with us the responsibility of this great need—and opportunity.

GEORGE H. BADGER, MINISTER

The Unitarian Advance

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Volume VII DECEMBER, 1916 Number 4

IS DEMOCRACY a failure? The average citizen of the most enlightened democracy in the world is likely to say "Yes!" vehemently if not bitterly, every time a popular election goes against him. "That shows!" he declares. "The people are not fit to decide important issues; the mob is stupid; the masses of men don't use their reasons, but only their passions and prejudices. The popular voice is very far from being the voice of God; it is the voice of brutish incapacity to think." Of course, by the same token, one's faith in democracy is enormously strengthened when a popular election goes our way. We realize then that in the face of blandishments and sophisticated appeals to prejudice and passion, the common people can be trusted; the nation is sound at the core. *Vox populi vox dei.* Fortunately, therefore, the friends of democracy are always in a majority, and we are all on the winning side part of the time; so that, given good digestions and normally amiable dispositions, our bitterest distrust of democracy in most adverse times is never very deep-seated.

* * *

IN HONEST fact, democracy is at best only an experiment in achieving civilization—and an experiment very near the beginning of its supreme adventure. For one thing, democracy has never been tried—in thoroughgoing and consistent fashion. We have always experimented with it under fettering constitutional or traditional reservations. For another thing, we are none of us, even the wisest and best, more than half educated in its fundamental lore. The only "free" people under any dispensation are the people "fit to be free;" and fitness for freedom is to be achieved only under long and arduous disciplines in the circumstance of being free. A prodigious amount of blundering and misadventure is necessary to the full education of democracy, and in the year 1916 in the freest country in the world, "education through blundering" is still primary school pedagogy for most of us. The best thing that can be said for democracy, at this stage of the adventure, is that with all its perils it is safer and wiser than any alternative that has yet been invented. A restricted ruling class has always proved a selfish and oppressive class; the classes not ruling invariably get the worst of it, socially, industrially, and morally. The long "tranquility" of Mexico under Diaz, for instance, was a "stability of peace" built upon the spoliation and degradation of the masses, and the corruption and degradation of the classes, as well. There is no blunder that democracy can possibly make so stupid as the blunder which oligarchy has invariably proved to be in the history of human progress. This fits inevitably, of course, with our modern rational theology. Human nature is inherently good, not bad; with all its frailty, its *urge* is for the better. It grows in divinity as it has chance to grow at all. And the divine factor in evolving growth is the self-respect of responsibility in freedom—which is what democracy really means.

* * *

THE recent election makes plainer than ever the stupidness of the timidity of the "Fathers of our Constitution" in their fear as to what real democracy might do to civilization. Our National Constitution is seriously handicapped by its blundering devices for putting something in between the raw will of the majority and the effectual government of the nation. Wherefore all this intricate machinery for the election of a President. A popular vote of all the people wouldn't do. Wise men must be selected by the people to do for the people what the people are not fit to do for themselves. These wise men, called electors, were to withdraw to themselves, and in the calm of their superior thoughtfulness and conscientious responsibility select the leader who should be the people's President. And lest even a nation's congress of electors should prove a "mob," if permitted to gather *en masse*, they must meet in segregated groups as representing state entities, to "deliberate and choose;" and then on a later date the recorded votes of these segregated

groups should be assembled. If by happy fortune their accumulated product of segregated thoughtfulness should focus to a determining choice for all the nation, the work would be done. If not, then there was that august body of selected and winnowed men of wisdom and conscientiousness, called Congress, who should make final decision of what was best for the people, in default of their electors.

* * *

IN ACTUAL working out, of course, our electoral system is "Democracy's Supreme Joke." Nobody save the writers of the Constitution ever took it seriously. Not a single election has ever taken place since our government was established, in which the spirit of the Constitution in this regard was decently respected. The people knew better; and with a cleverness of practicability delightfully effectual, they have taken the clumsy tool which a democracy-fearing Constitution gave them, and have made of it as near a popular institution as it could be made. From the very beginning, the "electors" have proved dummies; the people have insisted on doing their own choosing, so far as circumstances would permit; so that our present procedure contains no least "safeguard" against rash and demagogic action; it only injects a cumbersome and, in some details, an unjust complication of machinery to effect what otherwise could be done much more simply, speedily, and fairly.

* * *

FOR the plain fact is, that while the elector system presents no safeguards, it does involve hindrances to the will of the people. It is quite possible that a man chosen for President by a substantial plurality of the people's vote, may yet fail of election; while a man against whom a majority voice of the people has specifically spoken, may be inaugurated in his stead. That has actually happened twice in the history of our nation, and it came near happening in our recent election. Moreover, our system undoubtedly multiplies the chances for vexatious delays and disputes in the canvass of returns, and increases the temptations for crooked dealing. More significantly, it practically disenfranchises a large proportion of our voters. However close the national issue, the Democrat who votes in Vermont, and the Republican who votes in Texas, know equally well that their votes are futile in the final reckoning. By the same token, the votes of the Republican in Vermont and the Democrat in Texas seem practically as inconsequential for any particular individual. The voter knows that, however, close the nation's issue, his personal vote practically goes for nothing; the nation's vote will be no whit the less decisive or narrow because of his vote on either side in Vermont or Texas. And all because, a century and a half ago, the "Fathers" were afraid of the hazards of pure democracy! The best cure for the evils of democracy is always more democracy; the best escape from a false and blundering method of fixing the responsibility of national administration is the honest democratization of our Constitution.

* * *

OF COURSE, a good many people are sorely disappointed in the result of the election. It is no part of our editorial prerogative to reveal where our sympathies may lie; but there are two or three results which we believe all people can agree to rejoice in. In the first place, the man to be inaugurated is the actual choice of a substantial plurality of our people, and every man of civic honor must deplore any condition of things which would put even the "right man" in office where the popular voice had spoken for another. In the second place, Mr. Wilson's victory is not a partisan victory. If only Democrats had voted for him, his defeat would have been decisive. It is solely because in states manifestly Republican, as shown by the choice of local officers, enough Republicans scratched the ticket for President to turn the issue, that Wilson reached his goal. This fact is emphasized by the circumstance that in states where Mr. Hughes rolled up most decisive victories, the President "ran ahead of his ticket" to a significant degree. Not because the people wanted "the Democrats to stay in power," but because they wanted "four more years of Wilson" did the election go as it did.

* * *

THE growth of independent voting is the safety of the Republic, we believe; and we cannot refrain from the expression of further belief: Despite the

seeming fiasco of the Progressive party under the tangled conditions of this year's campaign, we cannot help believing that the time has come for an absolutely new alignment of party groupings, which will do away with the sad misfortune of sectionalism in politics. The present Republican and Democratic parties have both too much of Past overweighting their significance as to the Present; and this year's campaigns suggest most pregnant questions as to what will happen four years from now, when the personality of Mr. Wilson will be eliminated from the contest. One must honestly confess that Mr. Wilson's competitor was not the spontaneous choice of a single party, but the "compromise of expediency" to effect a *merger* of two parties of radically conflicting principles. Mr. Hughes' vigorous campaigning, in which he did more traveling and speaking than any other candidate has ever done in the history of America, never revealed where his sympathies lay in the issues which divided Progressives from Republicans, and he stated no platform of party principles differentiating his candidature vitally from the platforms of other parties. It was purely a campaign of "opposition"—of personal attack on "the man Wilson." Four years from now, that sort of campaign, we trust, cannot be waged. "Issues" must again be brought to the foreground; and the optimist for idealisms cannot escape the hope, to which this campaign's result brings encouragement, that if the issues prove, as four years ago, to be not the issues which have conventionally divided parties in the last half century, and in which the location of Mason and Dixon's line has been all too significant, but new and vital issues of the new day, circumstances may bring it about that this growing tide of independency in voting shall make more possible a move which shall eradicate the old sectional and traditional demarcations, and put all friends of genuine progressiveness in the same camp. Why not?

* * *

WE ARE glad to announce that Rev. Frank C. Doan has consented to conduct a Department of Inspirational Religion as a regular feature of THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE during the coming season. Mr. Doan is well known to all our readers, we doubt not, as former Professor of Theology in the Meadville Theological School, and, at present, minister of All Souls' Church in Summit, N. J.—a church having joint affiliation with the Unitarians and Universalists, though organized originally under Unitarian auspices. Mr. Doan is also President of the Unitarian Fellowship for Social Justice. Those who have come in contact with Dr. Doan's invigorating thought in any way will appreciate the privilege which is to be ours in having from month to month these contributions from his pen. His aim in this department will not be to present either an exposition of Humanistic Theology, nor a propaganda of Social Justice, but quickening suggestion in the things of the inner life. His article of this month sets the keynote of the purpose which he has set for his department.

* * *

MAY WE gently remind our readers again of the necessary division of editorial labors which the circumstances of our wide geographical diffusion of editorship involves? The man who lives in Texas has only the general literary editorship in his charge. He hasn't a thing to do with business, or with news (save that belonging to the Southern Conference), and to send to San Antonio renewals of subscriptions, or discontinuances, or changes of address, or complaints of irregularity, means waste of time and confusion in results. So, also, the sending of news matter from New England, the Middle States, or the West, to Texas, makes confusion and delay. Our business office is at 105 South Dearborn St., Chicago, and there only should be sent correspondence dealing with business matters. Contributed articles, poems, "letters to the Editor," books for review, and the like are not expected to go to Chicago, but to San Antonio, and delay and confusion are caused if they reach the wrong office. All New England news items are welcomed by *Rev. Charles P. Wellman, Willis St., Dorchester, Mass.* All Middle States news goes to *Rev. E. S. Wiers, Montclair, N. J.* All Western Conference news goes to *Rev. E. C. Smith, 105 South Dearborn St., Chicago,* and only Southern news is expected to come to San Antonio.

Nietzsche and Christianity

By Rev. Robert S. Loring,
Minister of the Unitarian Church at Ann Arbor, Mich.

Nietzsche's fighting gospel centers itself around his idea of "The Superman." This celebrated Superman is due to an idealistic interpretation of the doctrine of evolution. Nietzsche believes that evolution means something better than a brute struggle for mere existence. Evolution is an impulse of self-expression, to individuality to progress. It is a Will to Power, which would push vigorously beyond present man and give birth to the Superman. The life force strives to produce the hero, whom Carlyle would have us worship. The energy within demands Emerson's "right thou feelest, rush to do" type of man, who dares follow strong, unreasoned impulse. Its goal is the "new brood" of "perfect and free individuals" of whom Walt Whitman sings. Ibsen, in his teaching that "the strongest man is he who dares stand alone," reminds us of the lonely and advanced position Nietzsche's Superman will be forced to take.

The teaching about the Superman appears at the opening of Nietzsche's most celebrated book, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra.* For ten years, the sage and prophet Zarathustra has lived alone on the mountain. One morning, he gets up early and announces to the sun that he has accumulated so much wisdom that it rather tires him, a remark characteristic both of the Superman and of Nietzsche. So Zarathustra determines to walk down into the valley and share his overflowing wisdom with men. When he reaches the market place, he finds the people gathered together, waiting to see two dancers perform on a tight rope. He addresses them as they impatiently wait. Like every radical reformer, he attacks their self-satisfaction. "It is not your sins, it is your self-satisfaction that cries to heaven." You laugh at the apes from whom you sprang, but the future man will laugh just as much at you. Man is not a goal, as you stupidly think, but is something to be surpassed. You ought to recognize that you are a rope stretched between animal and the Superman. What have you done to push forward and help produce this Superman? If you refuse to move forward, the world will cease to produce great men. Only the degenerate man, the last of his race, will remain, the man who can see nothing great in life. He will blink his stupid eyes and sleepily ask, "What is creative power, or energy, or a star?" There will be no heroes or leaders in such a world; "everybody longs for equality; everybody is equal just because he longs for it. Whoever doubts this will, of his own accord, go to the home for the feeble-minded." The people, however, are not shocked by this picture of a race of men dragged down to the commonplace level. They shout in scorn, "Give us this last of all men, and you can have the Superman all to yourself." After this, they turn away from the prophet to something of real importance, for the two circus performers have appeared, and the tight-rope dancing has begun. Zarathustra, having failed in his mission to energize and reform society, returns to his lonely mountain home.

We have now the key to Nietzsche's attitude towards formal, church Christianity. On the one hand, we have his ideal of the higher type of man, the great leader, the strong impulsive hero, the Superman, an ideal in which we all in some form or other share. On the other hand, we have the crowd, not very eager for progress, content with the dead level of ordinary democracy, inclined to adopt a socialistic program of averaging everything downwards towards a dull, uninteresting equality. Nietzsche has an immense contempt for this crowd, not so much because it is the crowd, as because it likes to be the crowd. He asks philosophy, morality, democracy, socialism, what part they play in the conflict between the call of the ideal and the laziness of the flesh. The same burning question he asks of formal Christianity. Is it for the crowd or for the Superman? Does religion strengthen or weaken a man's belief in his call to be a pioneer? Does the church say "Nay" or "Yea" to the evolutionary impulse towards higher forms of life?

Before we pass to Nietzsche's bitter attack on Christianity, it is necessary to point out that Nietzsche, in agreement with many modern critics, draws a very sharp line, perhaps too sharp, between the Christian religion and its great founder. "The Christians have never led the life which Jesus commanded them to live." That worldly institution, the church, is precisely that "which the messenger of glad tidings regarded as beneath him, as behind him." "To be really Christian would mean absolute indifference to dogmas, priests, church, and theology," that is, would mean to live courageously above the whining priestly crowd. Whether the original gospel be desirable or not, Nietzsche thinks it is at least possible. "He who says today, 'I refuse to be a soldier, I care not for tribunals, I lay no claim to the service of the police, I will not do anything that disturbs the peace within me'—such a man would be a Christian." He pays his tribute to Jesus for his power to live this great and independent life, when he says of the crucifixion, "When the thief himself who endures a painful death declares, 'The way this Jesus suffers and dies, without a murmur of revolt or enmity, graciously and resignedly, is the only right way,' he assents to the gospel and by this very fact is in Paradise."

This approval of Jesus for his "superiority to every form of resentment" does not extend to the religion built around his name. Nietzsche insists that there "never was more than one Christian, and he died on the cross." The "glad tidings" of Jesus were closely followed by "worse tidings" of the Apostle Paul. With every extension of Christianity over larger and ruder masses of men, it became more vulgar and commonplace. The priestly and dogmatic religion at last built up is a "capital crime against life." Christian theology stands for the "profanation of the divine nature of man, instead of its accentuation." It places all evil on the side of man, and all good on the side of God. It says "Nay" to nature and to all that is natural, and so is inferior to paganism, which dares say "Yea" to nature and to all that is natural. Because it distrusts this present life, it also distrusts and would put down all brave men who would improve this present life. It is thus a "taming process" which makes a man more fit to live in a cage under the control of a priestly keeper than to live courageously out in the rough and tumble of real life. It is a social opiate rather than a tonic. Nietzsche regards formal Christianity and alcohol as the two great means of corruption, as the two powerful narcotics which would slow down man and decrease his social progress and efficiency. He says, "We no longer admire those dentists who extract teeth simply in order that they may not ache again." So he refuses to admire moral or religious teachers who wish to pull out life, its strong passions, its forward-moving instincts, its will to power, simply because they do not know what to do with life when it aches, do not know how to impose some sort of moderation upon its passions and use them to build up resourcefulness, progress, strength.

Nietzsche's attack on Christianity seems at first both unusual and shocking, but when analyzed most of it is seen to be the criticism common today that the church is not socially efficient. The church has weakened life by underrating life. Nietzsche asks the damaging questions: Are Christian doctrines useful? Do they build up strong, self-reliant character? Do they make society more efficient? We approach the subject from the practical and pragmatic point of view, where very person can judge from his own experience. Here is a man making a brave fight for self-control! Will it help him to teach that in Adam all men sinned, that it is therefore hopeless for any man to suppose he can live a life pleasing to God? Here is a man who courageously starts to work for radical social reform! Does it strengthen him to teach that the just man lives by faith, not by social work, and by faith alone? Here is a man who takes life seriously, who is willing to bear the responsibility for his own acts! Does it deepen his character to tell him that Christ by his death on the cross bears all his sins for him, and that he had better throw all responsibility upon his Saviour? Ibsen expressed his opinion of such doctrine:

"One man died for you of yore,
Cowardice is crime no more."

Here are a young man and a young

woman united in a bond of matrimony which to them is pure and holy. Is their belief in the sacredness of matrimony strengthened when they take their first child to be baptized and hear the clergyman say that the child is "conceived in sin" and needs to be "made regenerate" by the magic sprinkling of baptismal water? Or is married life made more sacred when the church teaches that when God wished to visit earth he had to be born of a pure virgin in order to escape the contamination of sex? Here is a modern scientist seeking in the eternal laws of nature for truths which can be applied to the salvation of society! Does truth have a deeper meaning for him when he is taught that revelation is sealed, that all saving ideas have come to an end with the teaching of the Bible as interpreted by the church or Pope? Here is another man who seeks for the divine in things close beside him, in the beauty of nature, the order of the stars, the love of friends! Is the world made more divine for him by the teaching that God is to be received only in the blood and body of Christ as given to men in the magic sacrament of the mass? There may be other doctrines of religion which are life-giving, life-strengthening, which do encourage individual and social progress; but certainly formal Christianity still contains too many doctrines of the disheartening and weakening kind. Would it not mean a startling change in the dogmas of most churches if they had the desire and the courage to throw away those doctrines which say "Nay" and keep only those which say "Yea" to life?

It is a furious attack which Nietzsche makes on Christianity; and fury generally overreaches itself. Nietzsche is only another example of what a strict orthodox bringing up can do to a man's mature faith. It violently drives a man from one extreme to another. But while Nietzsche's teaching can be successfully attacked at many points, it is better to learn what we can from him than to spend time in angry criticism. Taken in the right way, Nietzsche can do us good. He is not like a square meal to be taken three times a day and three hundred and sixty-five days in a year, with three extra meals thrown in for leap year. He is medicine, to be taken only now and then, in limited doses. If the tonic can do good, it is foolish to complain about its bitter and unchristian taste. Medicine does not have to taste good to do good; indeed, the more awful the taste the more powerful the appeal to the imagination. The work which this tonic can do for us seems clear. If, on the one hand, democracy needs to be exalted, needs to push its ideals far above the commonplace level of the crowd, religion needs to humble itself to be of more social service to man. If democracy needs to "hitch its wagon to a star," religion needs to spend less time searching the heavens, and more time trying to improve conditions in this present world. We may apply one of Nietzsche's short sayings both to men and the churches: "From peopele who merely pray, we must become people who bless." Perhaps a world in which it is possible for the people to bless may turn out to be a blessed world. Perhaps a life to all parts of which we ought to say "Yea," may turn out to be a blessed life, with more spiritual unity in it than Nietzsche was able to discern. Perhaps the Superman, or Christ, who lives above the standards of the crowd, above resentment, above fear of death, may not live alone at all, but may be in touch with the one Spiritual Reality, the Foundation of all progressive life, the Source of the individual and social "Will to Power," and the Promise of its ultimate success.

OLD MINISTERS FOR YOUNG.

According to the *Literary Digest,* a reaction is observed in Philadelphia against what the *Episcopal Recorder* calls "the almost universal demand that young men only should be called to vacant pastorates, as though youth *per se* were an all-inclusive qualification." Besides aligning itself on the side of the more mature man, it quotes the *Presbyterian,* which in turn takes its text from a humorous American weekly, and proceeds:

"*Life* says that no man ought to be allowed to preach before he is thirty-five years of age. It holds that present needs require better and stronger preaching and that no man is fit to do this work and

guide others in morals and religion until he has gained knowledge and experience in these high matters through study and actual living. It declares: 'The pulpit should be raised so that it could be reached only by the ladder of maturity and the staff of experience.' When a secular paper like *Life* is thinking of such things, it is surely time that religious journals and thinkers were giving it some attention. The present practice and craze of seeking only young men has greatly weakened the ministry in its own true power and efficiency. The work of the ministry is so high and important, touching the springs of character and dealing with the highest interests of time and eternity, that it requires time, and study, and experience to bring a man to his best. According to the modern practice, when a man comes to his best, it is time to lay him aside. So that the church is ever subject to experimentation, and she is always getting indigestible and unprepared food. She is always feeding on green fruit, and so the church is spiritually starved and unhealthy, and she develops a morbid appetite which craves worldly and secular things, and she counts herself fat and flourishing when she is bloated with these things."

GENERAL CONFERENCE OF UNITARIAN CHURCH.

The following letter of invitation was presented to the Council of the General Conference:

"This Annual Meeting of the congregation of the Church of the Messiah (Montreal), believing that the present times call for new and consecrated effort upon the part of all churches to improve the existing relations between nations, believing that the high moral enthusiasms of the Unitarian fellowship should be enlisted in this cause, and, further, believing that much good would result from the gathering of the Unitarians of the United States and of Canada, cordially invites the General Conference of Unitarians and Other Christian Churches to hold its biennial meeting of 1917 in the city of Montreal.

"In extending this invitation, we recall that the year 1917 will mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Church of the Messiah, the oldest Unitarian church in Canada, and that the year 1917 will mark the one hundredth anniversary of the agreement between the United States and Canada, known as the Rush-Bagot agreement, by which our common frontiers and the Great Lakes which join our shores have been free from all fortifications or other signs of hostility and distrust.

"We pledge to the General Conference our hearty support, and we trust that the officers will consider with favor our invitation and signalize the international character of the Conference by meeting for the first time on British soil.

"Should the General Conference accept our invitation, we would be glad to learn from its officers what service we can render to add to the comfort and happiness of the visiting Unitarians, and, in proportion to our resources and ability, will devote our energies to this end."

In response to this very cordial invitation, the Council of the Conference voted unanimously to accept the invitation and to hold the next session of the Conference with the Church of the Messiah, in Montreal, September 25-28, 1917.

Headquarters will be established at the Windsor Hotel, in which 600 delegates may easily be accommodated. In this hotel is located the Windsor Hall, which seats 1,000 people, and to which all the people of Montreal are in the habit of going for all occasions of great importance.

No pains will be spared to make this first international meeting of the General Conference productive of the largest service. After considering the program of the Conference in a committee of the whole, its completion was entrusted by the Council to the hands of the Program Committee, consisting of Rev. John H. Holmes, Chairman; Miss Lucy Lowell; Rev. Sydney B. Snow; Rev. John H. Lathrop; and Rev. W. F. Greenman, Secretary, to whom all correspondence should be addressed.

The announcement of this next session of the Conference is made at this time in order that those who have learned the great value of meeting with the Conference in various parts of the country may have ample time in which to anticipate this meeting in Montreal.

W. F. GREENMAN.

Milwaukee, October 14, 1916.

The Religion of Manhood

By Rev. Wm. Lord McKinney,
Minister of the First Unitarian Church, Geneseo, Ill.

THE religion of mature years is seldom the same as in childhood. Fairies give way to facts, and understanding takes the place of ignorance. However, it is not always clear as to what larger ideals take the place of childlike faith. Yet without question the increasing responsibilities, which come with the years, bring with them a broader vision of life and a firmer foundation for the things of the spirit, when we really meet their challenge.

As a minister of the liberal church, I consider it a great privilege to present to men the possibilities of the religious life. Not as a duty which we owe to the supreme creative intelligence, but rather an opportunity which comes with manhood itself to experience the deep things of God, and to live and grow thereby. This, as I see it, is the function of the church.

Oftentimes it is said that the church and religion are divorced; that the truth is not preached from the pulpits; that ministers are not sincere; and that organized Christianity retains nothing of the original gospel of Jesus. Be this as it may, the church represents much that is best in life, and has preserved through the ages much of the priceless treasure of real religion. Unquestionably, vital religion has ever been one of the greatest dynamics of life. Though seldom very common in the schools and colleges, it is usually found in the church; and thus we see that while the church is not identical with religion, it is really its home.

The church stands for inspiration. Its steeples point heavenward, and its music and ministry should inspire mankind to a life of service. Just as the artist whose work lays claim to fame had something other than painting materials and canvas, a power within the soul which was inspiration itself, so the individual who would live today in the full vigor of manhood must possess some dynamic or impelling force within the soul which makes for righteousness as against sin. It is with the confidence that this power is to be found in the ideals of religion and that the church of today has a real message for men, that I write these words.

Let me state at the outset that no argument could possibly be presented in the interests of personal religion that would be conclusive. The most vivid language could not picture the African jungle to the average Eskimo. There would be nothing in his consciousness to which the words would appeal. So the real proof of religion lies deep in the heart of man, too subtle for analysis and too sacred for utterance.

The history of organized religious movements in general is not such as would always appeal to the serious-minded man who is inclined to listen to its message. Many frauds, both pious and impious, have been perpetrated in the name of the Most High, and it is with difficulty that the average man is able to distinguish between the true and the false. Yet beneath the ruins, and hidden in the wreckage of the past, are to be found some of the everlasting truths of God. It is then to the verities of religious experience and not to its errors that I invite your careful consideration.

Today modern science is slowly but surely advancing with its irresistible "I know" and encountering the "I believe" of the church. For some years, the conflict has been waged, and it would seem that the outcome is clearly discernible. What have been called the old bulwarks of Christianity have fallen, never to rise again. The Apostles' Creed, for centuries an authoritative statement of the faith of the church, is now shown by conservative historians to have been a gradual development from the much simpler original statements. Then, too, the doctrine of the infallibility of the Bible has fallen before the light of critical inquiry, and the Scriptures are allowed to speak for themselves and be their own witnesses. Also the doctrine of original sin and the atonement are opposed beyond reconciliation to the generally accepted theory of evolution. Yet the place of religion itself is not being

questioned. It is being purified, although the process is not an easy one.

Christianity loses nothing in the collapse of creeds and dogmas. These have been discovered to be, as Hamlet says, "words, words, words," elevated to finally become idols worshiped as truth itself. Just as any masterpieece of art or literature is valued with but little reference to the date of its original inspiration or completion or even the name of the author, so the real essence and message of Christianity do not depend upon contingent theories of its origin or even the instruments through which it came into existence.

The result of the work of higher criticism has been decidedly constructive and not alone destructive in its nature. The motive of noted scholars has been to reveal the truth based on literary and historical research. When the consensus of such scholarship had finally given its verdict, which failed to support the traditional dogmas of Christianity, then the church began to search for the things that remain, the eternal and everlasting foundations of religion itself. Thus today, as never before, we have Modernists in the Roman Church and the liberal branch in every one of the historic churches of Christendom, and the end is not yet.

The watchword of these liberal movements is progress. They accept the words of Jesus, "Greater works than these shall ye do," and believe that the golden age of mankind is forward and not back in the dawn of creation. We are getting down to bed rock in our deeper understanding and appreciation of life. The final outcome cannot be otherwise than beneficial.

Let us mention a few of the grander ideals of manly faith. The things which mean so much to the man who, in an earnest though stumbling manner, is walking the pathway of life. What has Christianity to offer him who would love God with all his heart and his neighbor as himself?

The first of these is faith in God. Occasionally, when some seemingly cruel combinations of circumstances arise which for the moment strike terror to the soul, men are inclined to doubt the existence of any moral order in the universe. Then, if ever, must be felt the assurance which comes with faith in God and in his law. An instance in the life of the Master illustrates this. Jesus in a burst of righteous indignation had driven the money changers out of the Temple. The next day, in company with the disciples, Peter drew his attention to the fig tree which Jesus had cursed and which was now withered. In the light of the circumstances, it seemed to reflect somewhat on the teachings of the Master, who perceived the doubt in Peter's mind and said, "Have faith in God." These words should represent the real attitude on the part of men of today who feel at times that many inconsistencies occur, even in the lives of those most dear. Such faith, in its last analysis, means we should trust the divine order even when we behold apparent disorder in the affairs of life, and that we should be willing to have at least as much faith in God as in mankind. What individual hesitates to repose in confidence on swift-moving trains or steamships guided by unknown engineers through the darkness of midnight at a terrific rate of speed? Yet when the events of a day call upon us to face some situation of danger or uncertainty, how often we fail to trust in God.

Much of this discussion centers around the question as to whether there is any moral foundation to nature. Like Job of old, we inquire as to why the wicked prosper and the righteous suffer. But this problem seems to present itself only in the presence of personal sorrow. In the drama of Job, it is not answered, but disappears in the return of prosperity. In reality, it is not a vital question to the healthy mind, which is concerned rather with assuring itself that it is on the side of right and then it is not long before we draw the conclusion that if life is worth anything nature must be consistent and righteousness bring its own reward.

Furthermore, such doubt concerning the verities of life is a survival of the religion of Fear. This is the one discordant note in the religions of the past. Whether it be the fear of God or any evil in nature, the result is the same. We cannot trust God and at the same time fear him or nature over which his intelligence reigns supreme. No one can view life in all its grandeur and think

of God as other than beneficent in all his relationships. Death then is to be feared no more than the setting sun, which sinks below the western sky to shine on other lands and to return at tomorrow's dawn with the promise of life renewed.

The manly view of the problem of evil is to meet and conquer it. Today the belief in an organized kingdom of evil presided over by a personal devil is decidedly destructive in its effect on the mind. This is not only a travesty on the thought of God, but has no place in a healthy imagination. We face the fact of evil in the world like we do that of disease, and seek to overcome it. It is just as logical to believe that sickness and disease are organized for effective destruction among the ranks of mankind as to think that in nature there is an organized force of evil led on by princes of darkness for the overthrow of all that is good and true. Furthermore, just as medical science is gaining the mastery of dread diseases and preventing outbreaks of plagues, which were once believed to represent the wrath of God, so in the struggle of man against evil we believe that some day the good will completely triumph and there shall dawn the time when "the kingdoms of the earth shall become the kingdoms of our God." To help toward the coming of this kingdom of heaven was the vision of Jesus, and is, today, the glorious hope of the church.

Each day is one's life in miniature. As we live today, so we would have lived in the past, and so we desire to live tomorrow. It embodies in its few passing hours all our hopes and ideals of work and play. As this truth dawns upon the mind, then such problems as the future life have no more interest than our past life. Both are lost in the immortality of the present, which is endlessly rich in the possibilities of life and action. To the individual who really appreciates the immensity of the present hour, the past and the future alike lack reality. He listens to the "exhortation of the dawn" as the highest incentive to duty, and at the close of day the benediction of a glorious sunset is sufficient reward. God has thus spoken to holy men of all ages, but never in clearer tones than today in your life and mine as we listen to the call of the hour.

Thus from the sun-crowned summit of manhood is to be seen life in all its varied aspects. Consciously or unconsciously, we pass judgment as to whether it is good or bad. If in your opinion it is evil, then the ideals of religion will find no response in your heart. But if you should decide that it is noble, then the call of the religious will make a strong appeal to your higher nature. In its last analysis, this is indeed the spirit of optimism born of faith in God and in mankind. Those so happy as to make this choice have discovered the jewel of great price, for it carries with it the real secret of eternal happiness.

Another characteristic of the religion of manhood is its open-mindedness. There are many things concerning which absolute knowledge is an impossibility and at times even not desirable. Our attitude should rather be that of a judge who withholds his decision until all the evidence has been presented, and then does not assume what cannot be proved. Nowhere does this apply with greater force than in our religious beliefs. In this field, where only too often the superstitions of the past cast their shadows across the pathway of truth, one should maintain an ever-vigilant watchfulness lest he fall into error. The new science of comparative religion has penetrated the "holy of holies" of antiquity, and has brought forth many testimonies from ancient temples in the Far East and from prophets and holy seers in many lands to prove:

> "Never was to chosen race
> That unstinted tide confined;
> Thine is every time and place,
> Fountain sweet of heart and mind."

When scientific discoveries bring their blessings to mankind and make for the more abundant life in the here and now, we praise the spirit of conquest which leads inventors forth to conquer the unknown. Yet we should not fail to note the mental attitude which makes such discoveries possible. Without implicit faith in the laws of nature and an expectancy of greater things in the present and future than in the past, such glorious progress would be an impossibility. Even so, in the realm of religious experience, with confident and open minds we look forward, not backward, in the greatness of our expectation, and we shall not

be disappointed in our search for new revelations in this growing world.

Finally, true religion is a life. It is not a creed, an inheritance from the past, nor is it even worship, which in its nobler forms links the soul of man with the secret place of the Most High. It finds its source of strength in the experiences of life. Too much cannot be said of this vital nature of religious experience. For it is the sanction of faith itself. In reality, one need not look beyond the chapters of his own memory to find sufficient data upon which to base his interest in the higher life. Excluding all pretense of authority in the church and tradition, this should be sufficient to compel men to cast aside feelings of indifference, and in the courageous spirit of manliness accept the challenge of righteousness and religion.

The religion of Jesus and the prophets was the religion of manhood. In this generation, the manly character of the Man of Galilee is coming into its own. Having drawn aside all the drapery of oriental imagination, we find in him something which compels our respect and admiration. A Methodist Bishop characterized Jesus as "the man who challenged the skies for a roadbed and found the walking good." Men will often venture all they have on the rise and fall of the stock market, and on the results of a business deal risk the savings of a lifetime, yet comparatively few speculate on the limitations of righteous ideals. Nowhere, however, do we find such evidence of increase, manyfold, as in the characters of men who have had the courage to listen to the call of the spirit of God. There invariably comes a time in the career of everyone, when the worthless aspects of unrighteousness appear in their true light, and the constructive nature of the nobler life makes its silent appeal. Call this by whatever name you wish, it is the voice of the divine within your own soul, bespeaking a higher destiny. To respond to its promptings, to the best of your ability, though you stumble again and again, is to call to your aid all the forces of life by whose unfailing power the starry heavens are bright. To resolve within your heart of hearts to obey the voice of conscience is to set in motion countless ideals which of themselves are a dynamic power for the attainment of the higher life. To do this without mental reserve or the thought of selfish gain is truly the religion of manhood itself.

This in brief is the message of the liberal faith. It is mysticism without its mystifications. It is Christianity without the legends and myths of other ages. It is a program big enough for the most heroic minds to endeavor to fulfill and simple enough for the humblest beginner.

The Reality of Error and Evil

THE Athanasian Creed may be very cloudy and imperfect metaphysics, but it contains one extremely important and significant statement, "Which Faith except everyone do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly." We repudiate the form of the statement, but there is much more substantial truth in it than has been always recognized. That statement affirms the existence of real error and the extreme mischief of error. It is not content, like many modern thinkers, with mildly arguing against error or explaining it away. It asserts that really to believe a lie is a dangerous and damnable condition.

I am not going to defend the doctrine of the Unity of God as against the doctrine of the Trinity, but, on the other hand, I am not going to say that they mean really just the same thing. I am going to emphasize the fact that there are real evils, real errors in life and thought, and that the way to ultimate harmony is by recognizing and opposing them, and not by explaining them away in a misty benevolence of kindly sympathy.

We are often told, and rightly told, that to feel the fundamental importance of the things on which we are agreed and the comparative unimportance of the things about which we differ is a great happiness breaking in on wearisome divisions and misunderstandings. There are many bitter controversies and disputes which could be and ought to

be avoided if men knew each other better, if they pierced below the surface and saw the underlying unity.

But is it always true that the fundamental things are the things about which everyone is really in agreement with everyone else, and the superficial things are the only things about which there is any dispute? It belonged to the theory of life and truth generally held by liberal, tolerant men in the last half of the nineteenth century to answer that question in the affirmative.

The view was that we all really mean the same thing, that we all really worship the same God. We use different language, different forms, different creeds and ritual, but essentially we are one. The differences are skin-deep; all philosophers, all theologians, all who are trying to express what they conceive to be the truth, are really saying the same thing, or, at all events, are really describing the same truth from different points of view. We express ourselves differently, but the thing which each is trying to express is the same. Whether we call God, Zeus, or Jehovah, or Jesus, or whether we call him the great Unknown, or the First Cause, or Force, or Matter, is of no real significance. We really mean the same thing all the time. Our differences are superficial, our agreements are fundamental.

That view went on with less clearness but no less cogency to abolish moral distinctions as well as intellectual ones. Fundamentally, all men are good. Moral differences are only superficial. There is no real evil, just as there is no real error. All men are, with more or less success, trying to be good; all actions are more or less satisfactory attempts to attain goodness. "To understand everything," as the French proverb says, "is to pardon everything." No man really means harm, no man really loves cruelty and wickedness. Moral distinctions are only superficial.

That seems to me the tendency of nineteenth-century tolerant liberalism. There was no fundamental opposition between men or between thoughts. Falsehood and evil are merely imperfect truth and imperfect goodness. The blessed word evolution explained it all. They were only different stages of the one great divine process. What we call evil is only goodness rather less developed than what we call good. Its form is imperfect, but its soul is sound. What we call error is only truth a little less developed than what we call truth. All history is a harmony; it is a process widening with the suns. There is nothing definitely wrong or false anywhere. All we find are infinite varieties of imperfection, infinite varieties of inadequate expressions of one fundamental eternal reality. Every man who really believes something and lives by it, is believing the same thing as another man who is equally convinced of what, on the surface, looks like the exact opposite. The apparent contradictions are due only to misunderstanding or to the imperfection of our powers of expression. All sincere thought is really true thought, and can be interpreted if rightly understood in terms of what looks like its contradictory. Sincere atheism is really sincere theism if you pierce below the sruface, or at any rate they are both equally important and equally inadequate expressions of the same fundamental Reality. Sincere selfishness is really sincere but ignorant unselfishness, if you enter sympathetically into the mind of the selfish man. That sounds very broad and kind, but it becomes much more significant and more dangerous if you turn it the other way, as men often did, and say: All sincere unselfishness is really sincere but ignorant selfishness, if you enter sympathetically into the mind of the unselfish man.

The result of this wide tolerance and this happy optimism that all nations want peace and all individuals want goodness, and that all thinkers are essentially agreed, was an extraordinary anarchy and cynicism. We were never more at odds with one another than under this theory that everybody was right and nobody was wrong. We did not, indeed, dispute much with one another about the great things which have divided men in the past. We did not quarrel about God, if atheism meant the same thing as theism, there was no reason for doing so. We did not quarrel about goodness; if all men were essentially good, and the vicious man was only a little less developed—or perhaps a little more developed as some thought—than the virtuous man, there was no reason for

doing so. Let each man work out his own thoughts and his own ideals on his own lines, and each will contribute to the one underlying truth. The strange thing is that this theory did not make for peace. We were divided into parties and classes bitterly critical of one another and fighting one another. In the absence of any clear consciousness of right and wrong, truth and falsehood, we were content to think of each other as fools and idiots. We were always trying to show up the crass ignorance and stupidity of the other side.

Critics were busy proving with great enjoyment and a pose of intense superiority that those who thought they believed in God did not really believe in God, and that those who thought they had high ideals really had low ideals. The tendency was to prove that we all meant the same thing by proving that we all meant a selfish and mean thing. The saints are no better than the sinners, the philosophers are no wiser than the savages—that is the way in which the fundamental unity of the human race was often proved. The man who imagines he is standing for something great is really standing only for something base and small. The nation which imagines it is fighting for the freedom of small peoples is really fighting only for its own hand. We are all just alike, whatever our pretenses, dominated by pride, and passion, and greed. The only difference is the comparatively superficial one that some people know it and the majority are pretending or deluded. The best men on these lines are those who definitely and sincerely want something for themselves and devote themselves to getting it, and do not pretend to be doing anything else. To be manifestly selfish and aggressive is a stronger and wiser course than to be a hypocrite.

And now that theory of underlying identity in all men and in all opinions has broken down. We have awakened to the realization of the reality of error and of evil. We are not inclined to explain Prussia's action as a mistaken quest for good. It is not something which means really just the same thing as that of the Allies, but which is differently expressed. There are some people who carry on the old traditions of a superficial optimism which cannot recognize real evil or error anywhere or in anyone, and who continue to talk as if there were no deeply grounded opposition. For them this war—as many wars have been—is a mere tragic muddle. We are all equally wrong or equally right. We are involved in an awful conflict which means nothing and which is mainly due to mistakes and mutual misunderstandings. There is no real contradiction between the ideals of the two antagonists. We are just as selfish as Germany, or, if we prefer to express it more pleasantly, Germany is just as unselfish as ourselves. . . .

We have been rudely awakened to the existence of the evil will; we have become more deeply conscious of the reality of sin and error; we have come to feel that sincerity is not everything, and that the old optimistic doctrine that if only men are sincere all is well, is untrue. No one can doubt the sincerity with which the German faith is held by large multitudes, but that only makes the false theory so sincerely held and so bravely supported, more dangerous and deadly.

That deepened sense of the reality of evil and error will have a far-reaching influence on religion and life. It would, of course, be utterly inadequate to confine the opposition to our present conflict, and I am sure that in all honest minds it will not be so confined. The Prussian system of militarism is not the only example of the evil will, or something incompatible with good, of something which all the forces of good must seek to overthrow. There is sin in our own hearts, there is evil with which we have to strive in our own national life.

And the perversion of truth which we recognize so clearly in Prussian thoughts and aims is not the only perversion of truth which can be found. It is only the most striking and dangerous illustration of what is widespread and ever thwarting the progress of the world. Our eyes have been opened by this world-wide conflict between two ideals to the reality of evil and of error, and we have felt their awful power. They are not friends in disguise, they are not different ways of expressing the same thing. No doubt there is a danger of the recrudescence of bigotry in this view, against which we must be on our guard. There was something in the old liberal thought which

was true. Good men may express themselves differently. Words and thoughts are often very imperfect instruments for revealing the inner mind. Truth takes many forms because it is infinitely greater than any form in which men try to express it. But we have to recognize that all doctrines sincerely held are not fundamentally true, and that all men who dare to live out what they believe and desire as best are not necessarily good. We cannot embrace the whole world with a genial, comfortable sense that after all everybody is really right. There is a conflict of infinite importance to be waged, both within the soul and in the world, a conflict with real error and real evil. It is only through such fearless facing of facts and through such conflict that true peace and unity can be attained, whether in our own lives or in the greater life of the whole.

A MEDITATION.

I was walking in the open country, when suddenly I came upon a picture. Green and gold were in the fields, and blue and white in the heavens. The song of birds was in the air, and the fragrance of flowers—everywhere. But the joy was only for a moment. Then a great pain was upon me.

Hurriedly, I retraced my steps to the burning city, that I might find a friend to whom I could give my picture. I could not keep the joy I had found until I had given it away.

I was pushing my way along the path of life, struggling with all around me, when suddenly I stumbled upon a great truth, and hugged it to my bosom.

But I could not keep my truth to myself. I must hurry to the public place and give it to the whole world.

May we not come to look upon the church as something more than a source of gifts to our needs, something more than a source of solace for our sorrows, something more than a source of approbation for our achievements? May we come to look upon the church merely as a giver, and come to regard it as a channel through which we can give the best that we have, and our all, and, in the giving, find life, and life more abundantly. NELSON SPRINGER.

NOONDAY SERVICES IN KING'S CHAPEL.

Noonday services in King's Chapel began for their fifth season on November 1st, and will continue until Easter. These devotional services are becoming more widely known and appreciated every year; last year over 12,000 people, a large proportion being men, attended, and gained inspiration from the half-hour in this beautiful, historic Boston church. These services give an exceptional opportunity to the people of Boston and vicinity to hear many of the finest preachers of the present day, as ministers from far and near, and from all denominations, help in their conduct. The service consists of a period of organ music, followed by a ten-minute address, and ends with a hymn. An entirely musical service, with Malcolm Lang, organist of King's Chapel, at the organ, occurs every Saturday.

THE CONFERENCE IN WASHINGTON.

The thirty-second annual meeting of the Unitarian Conference of the Middle States and Canada was held in All Souls' Church, Washington, D. C., November 20th, 21st, and 22nd.

There was a reception and registration of delegates at the church on Monday afternoon, and in the evening Rev. James A. Fairley preached the annual conference sermon, assisted by Rev. L. Walter Mason and Rev. Alfred J. Wilson.

On Tuesday, after a commemoration communion service, conducted by Rev. John Howland Lathrop, assisted by Rev. Henry T. Secrist and Rev. Walter M. Howlett, the annual business session with address by the President of the Conference, Mr. William R. Billings, was followed by an address on "The Enlistment and Organization of our Young People," by Rev. Frederick M. Eliot, President of the Young People's Religious Union, and discussion by Rev. Walter Reid Hunt and Rev. Henry J. Adlard. A luncheon was given to the visiting ministers by Rev. U. G. B. Pierce at the Cosmos Club, where there was a symposium on the topic, "Is Ritualism Con-

sistent with Our Unitarian Spirit?"—led by Rev. J. T. Sunderland, on "Our Puritan Tradition of Simplicity," and Rev. Frank C. Doan, on "Ritualism and Humanism."

A luncheon tendered to visiting delegates by the Alliance of All Souls' Church was followed by a meeting of the Woman's Alliance in All Souls' Church.

At the evening public meeting, addresses on "Why You Should Know Unitarianism" were given by Rev. Samuel A. Eliot, Mary Austen, and Rev. Clayton R. Bowen.

On Wednesday, November 22nd, after a devotional service, conducted by Rev. Elizabeth Padgham, and a business session, addresses from the missionary field were given by Rev. Asaph R. Shelander of Paterson, N. J., and Rev. Edmund H. Reeman of Trenton, N. J. Later, Rev. Florence Buck spoke on "The Use of Dramas, Pageants, and Tableaux in the Church School," followed by general discussion. The closing service of prayer was conducted by Rev. John H. Applebee.

WOMAN'S ALLIANCE.

The Chicago Associate Alliance met in the Memorial Chapel, Thursday, November 2nd, at 11 a. m., the President, Mrs. Lynn, in the chair. Mrs. Sperling gave a very interesting report of "Religious News" items. The President then introduced Mrs. Caroline S. Atherton of Boston, Recording Secretary of the National Alliance, who was listened to with deep interest. It is hoped her enthusiasm will stir us up to do more and better work. Members and guests numbered sixty-one, one guest being present from California. Luncheon was served at 1 o'clock, and an informal discussion of the Post Office Mission and Cheerful Letter work followed. Meeting adjourned until January 4, 1917.

A. M. Coxe,
Secretary.

Mrs. Caroline S. Atherton, Recording Secretary of the National Alliance, visited the Middle West, the latter part of October, speaking at Kansas City, St. Louis, Chicago, Kalamazoo, and Toledo. At three of these points, she was able to meet Associate Alliances, so that in this one trip she had opportunity to meet members of seventeen branches. Her visit was greatly appreciated and did much to increase the enthusiasm and widen the outlook of the local organizations.

The National Vice-President for the Middle West, Mrs. Paul M. Chamberlain, is making a new record in field work for her office. Late in November, she visited the branches at Buda, Sheffield, Geneseo, Iowa City, and Keokuk, and she plans a trip early in December which will include visits to the Alliances at Wichita, Topeka, Lawrence, Kansas City, Lincoln, and Griswold, Iowa.

The New York League of Unitarian Women held their first meeting of the season on Friday, November 3rd, in the Church of the Messiah, New York. The attendance was large, many visitors being present.

Mrs. Bishoprick, the new President, extended a hearty welcome to all. The minutes of the last meeting and the Treasurer's report were read and approved. In place of the "Religious News" report, Mrs. Bishoprick gave a very interesting account of the meetings held during the "Anniversary Week" in Boston. These, she stated, were well attended, assuring us that only those absent missed the rare treat enjoyed by all present.

The appeal for the collection was made by Mrs. Sullivan in behalf of the University Church at Seattle, Wash.

The speaker of the day was Rev. Samuel R. Maxwell of the Second Church, Boston. This church was founded in 1649. His subject was "Spiritual Vision." He said many things over which one could think seriously.

Mr. Holmes, the minister, gave a word of welcome to all, and Mr. Brown, his assistant, made a few timely remarks.

Having concluded the meeting with the Lord's Prayer, an invitation to luncheon was extended to all present by Mrs. Robbins, the President of the Branch Alliance.

Ada L. Barry.

Department of Inspirational Religion

Conducted by Rev. Frank C. Doan.

A QUARTER-HOUR COMMUNION.

"Un quart d'heure pour Dieu."

I.

The other day, in rummaging through some musty old pamphlets in the New York Public Library, I stumbled upon the records of a remarkable order of French mystics. The thing which first caught my eye was the motto printed on the outside cover of the pamphlet, *"Un quart d'heure pour Dieu."* This motto, I found as I read along, caught up in a single phrase the sole obligation of the "order." On being passed to membership, a candidate was required to pledge himself to spend each day a quarter-hour communing with the Eternal.

A simple and yet solemn obligation for any man to underwrite! Each day to spend fifteen minutes meditating on the eternal values in life; for at least a quarter-hour each day to fall back upon the Eternal for strength and guidance; a daily practice of the presence of God—there you have a man's obligation to keep.

II.

It is an obligation the modern world needs to take upon itself. To most men today, God is a theory, not a living, present reality. They take God as a matter of course, and dismiss him accordingly. If the reader doesn't believe this, he can easily put it to the test. Go out on the street and stop the first man you meet and ask him if he believes in God. He will reply with an astonished, "Yes, of course." Then ask him if he has seen God face to face lately; if he has in any real sense opened his soul and let the eternal currents flow through him; if of late he has felt the eternal imperatives of justice and righteousness really pounding at the door of his closed life, seeking to break through and possess the citadel of his soul; if he has spent so much as a quarter-hour getting close to the God he so readily professes—do this, and the chances are you will be asking this stranger on the street questions he has never put to himself.

Sometimes, when in a great public gathering, I have wondered what would happen if some one should suddenly appear on the platform and ask all those to stand up who had thought of God and felt his presence, say, within the last twenty-four hours. Stand up and be seen of men! Or, take you who are now reading these words. How many of you, I ask, have paused during this day to see whether God is really with you, his spirit in you, his life moving you in all your ways? Not many people, I fear, could stand up under any such practical test of their personal experience of God.

III.

Yet I know of no other way to tell whether a man really has God or not. You may believe in God as a matter of course. Most men do. And define him in all sorts of superlatives—infinite, absolute, perfect. Most men can. But, practically speaking, there is no God at all for you or me unless we can and do regularly feel his real presence in our lives. The real atheist is the man with a Godless soul, a man whose spirit has never felt the touch of God's spirit within him. You may say you believe that God is just. But you don't really, unless you can and do feel his eternal presence in you, struggling to make you, you personally, just in spirit and in deed. Or that God is love. But your belief is a barren formula until the day you have learned to open wide the flood gates of your life, and let his spirit of infinite love inundate your soul, your own personal soul.

And the only way to come to this vivid sense of God's living presence in you, making for justice and love, is by this daily communion with his spirit. Do you want to feel God's personal presence in you? There is one absolutely certain way, and one only. Set aside a time in each day. Make a solemn appointment with God. Let nothing interfere with that engagement, no interruptions break in upon that sacred quarter-hour. Do this with constancy, day after day, and the time will come when God's presence with all that means of justice, and righteousness, and peace, and love, will come to possess your soul from center to circumference; his spirit will cover yours as the waters cover the sea.

IV.

To center your life in God doesn't take much time either. Fifteen minutes a day will do. You would be surprised to find what wonders you can work in any direction with only a quarter-hour a day. I remember a conversation I once had with my friend and master, the late Professor William James. It was one of those utterly friendly and personal talks that so endeared this great-souled man to all his students. I have forgotten now how so trivial a matter came into our talk; but I told him incidentally that what with lectures, theses and all the rest of my daily duties, I found it impossible to keep up my German and French. Professor James asked me if I couldn't spare, say, a quarter-hour each day on my German, and maybe another for French. I told him of course I wasn't so busy as all that. "Well, then," he said, "you try a daily reading of German and French for a quarter-hour each. You will be astonished to find what a lot you can accomplish by this brief but frequent contact with these languages you say are getting away from you." Of course, he was right about it. It isn't the amount of time you put on any task that counts so much, as the frequency and the concentration with which you return to it.

Take fifteen minutes each day for quiet meditation. You can't be too busy for that. Go to bed that much later at night; you will find your sleep all the more refreshing and restful for that quarter-hour of silent prayer. Or take the time out of your business; you will find that your mind is all the clearer, your decisions quicker, your hands cleaner, and your heart purer, for those stolen moments of solemn communion with the Most High in your soul.

Merchants are accustomed from time to time "to take account of stock," as they call it. Every so often, no matter how busy they may be, nor how good trade is, they shut down their factories, close their stores, and go over their stock to see what their resources are, where their supplies are running out and in need of replenishing. This is regarded as good business practice. Just so, it is good spiritual practice to pause now and then to see how our credit stands with God; close our life for, say, a quarter-hour, against all intrusions from without; and find out what our eternal resources are, where our spirit is weak and in need of replenishing from the eternal sources. Stop now and then for this soul's appraisal; to renew your sense of God's presence in your life. A quarter-hour for God! and your life will increase daily in strength, and joy, and peace.

V.

Many men today have lost the habit of communion with God. The man who pauses for so much as a quarter-hour a day to steady himself and get his eternal bearings before plunging again into the wild confusion of our modern life—such a praying man is the exception today. I think there are times when most men want to pray; to steady themselves under the heat and burden of the day; "to slake their thirsty souls at the eternal waterbrooks." But they can't; they have forgotten how; they don't know where and how to begin. Or they won't; their knees won't bend; their spirits won't give in.

I am thinking now of thoughtful men who have left off praying because they don't believe in prayer: Why pray when there is no God to answer? There are many reasons for this modern man's unbelief in prayer. I think I understand these reasons. And I accept them, too, all of them, as far as they go. Perhaps it would be well in some later communication to this *department* to consider these difficulties which hinder many a thoughtful man and woman from praying. But it is enough for my present purpose to say that nothing can stand in the way of what I mean by prayer. I don't care what your idea of God is, or whether you have any at all. Every man has within him some ideal. Every man feels within him a spirit of justice and love of his kind. Let's call that inner ideal or spirit the "Most High" within that man. That man can pray. That spirit within every human breast is what I mean by God—the spirit of justice and love I find deep down in my own soul and in the souls of all men, a living spirit that unites all men; a spirit of humanity, I like to call it, a deep soul of humanity, resistless against all the motives of injustice and hatred which now and then sweep over and mar the face of humanity. That's God! You may believe more than this if you will. Less than this you cannot

believe, without denying your own soul. This God you can *see,* if you will but open the windows of your soul. For he *is* you (as the Hindu mystics love to say), your deepest, truest self.

Some things a man gets to know after while. I know that when I pause for a quarter-hour to renew and deepen the spirit of justice and love I find all ready within me I come closer to God—the only God my soul can ever find and ever need. I know that, if I be constant, this quarter-hour of quiet communion (with myself, if anyone likes to put it that way; with my deeper self which is God in me) marks out my whole day for me, and sweetens me with a spirit of love, and strengthens me with purposes of justice. That's praying. And no man can ever convince me that it isn't both reasonable and real.

VI.

I have wanted this to be my first word as editor of this new department in THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE: *Pray.*

You must surely see how broad and practical is this way of prayer as I see it. You believe in your own soul? Surely you do. And you find there a spirit of justice and love. And the more you find that spirit dwelling in you, the more you see it in the souls of others. That spirit of humanity is God—or call it the "eternal," or the "indwelling Christ," or the "spirit of the hive," or what you will. Only be very sure it is there—in you, and yet mightier than you, in you and in all men; slowly, resistlessly drawing all men together toward its own ends, even the ends of justice and love on earth.

Start with this spirit in you; renew and deepen it day by day; increase the spirit of justice and love already in you by a constant and repeated drawing upon the eternal sources—and you're praying! You have taken the first step in that direction of perfect union of your soul with God's of which the mystics of all ages have spoken.

Some one has said, "To go upstairs you must take the first step as well as the last." In this matter of prayer, the thing is to take the first step. After all the prayerless years, this first step will be awkward and hesitating for some of my readers. It will be hard at first. Your thoughts will wander; the cares, and worries, and plans of the day will keep intruding upon even this quarter-hour you have set aside for quiet meditation. But take the first step; don't hurry; be patient; learn to wait for the uprising of God's spirit within you. Take this first step, and the last step will one day follow, and you will find your spirit at last on the heights, where you and God are one in spirit.

VII.

Why not form a "Quarter-Hour Communion" on the lines of that ancient order whose records I found in the Library the other day—an order with no constitution to go by, no fees, no officers, just a group of us drawn together by our desire to keep in daily touch with God? If those of you who may feel as I do about this matter of daily meditation will cut out and sign the membership blank below, and forward it to me, I will gladly keep the file. Let me know, too, if you want extra cards for your friends.

MEMBERSHIP BLANK.

The Quarter-Hour Communion.
Un quart d'heure pour Dieu.

I pledge myself to spend a quarter-hour each day in communion with God, or the Highest I can find.

Name .....

Address .....

FAITH'S CONSOLATION.

How sadly do we fear becoming old—
Losing youth's pleasing graces, one by one;
Ling'ring alone of all the dear home fold,
The turning reel of life's yarn nearly spun;
The fires on one's own hearthstone long since cold;
All service ended, and no prizes won!

But, oh, the pictures of the world unseen
That every moment front the inner eye!
And pictures mem'ry throws upon her screen
Which show that love and goodness never die;
Thus the heart's comfort is a faith serene
That all shall be restored us by and by.

—[SARAH E. BURTON.
Pomona, N. C.

NEW BOOKS.

THE BROOK KERITH: A SYRIAN STORY, *by George Moore.* The Macmillan Company, New York. 486 pp. $1.50.

This is a whimsical book written by a man of surpassing audacity. George Moore's audacity is a charming matter when dealing with many aspects of contemporary life—especially as lived in his own romantic and tragic Ireland, although that audacity becomes too often a bit abashing when he deals with the grosser realisms of the sex problem. In this book, his audacity takes a new turn; and we honestly say that it does not charm us here. Not but that many pages of *The Brook Kerith* are delightfully written with all that fascination which Moore's Irish genius can impart; and a certain quaint atmosphere of mysticism strangely wedded to most naked realisms imbues all with a spirit of delightfully elusive poetry. Nor have we any quarrel, ourselves, with the boldness of the author's heresies. To one who denies all factors of the "supernatural" in the career of Jesus, the explanation which this story offers of what may have happened after the crucifixion is no more unreasonable than those explanations usually held to. One guess may be as good as another.

Besides, Mr. Moore is not "guessing." This is not a study in Biblical criticism, as it is not a thesis in dogmatic interpretation. It is "pure art;" a work of imagination, a novelist's adventure at a literary enterprise—to invent a *Syrian Story* of human drama, using a fanciful possibility as to the circumstances of the "myth of Jesus" as raw material for creative artistry. Of course, a reverent believer in the Christian religion would not use such material with such audacity. The simple fact is that George Moore, not being a Christian believer, and finding the resurrection tradition provocative of an artistic "reaction" of novel significance, seized upon it without the least scruple and doubtless with a true Celt's love of doing an outrageous thing—and did with it what he pleased to his own temperamental satisfaction.

It is with the art of this book that we chiefly quarrel. Dogmatically and critically, it has slight consequence; as a work of imaginative literature, it chiefly fails of George Moore's own standard. For, to our mind, despite its over-lavishness in detailed realisms, some of which are even offensive in their coarse explicitness, the book lacks vitally the tone of *reality.* The promise of that very human little Joseph of Arimathæa which the opening chapters present, fails so pitiably in the later chapters; we fail to feel the beat of genuine human experience in much of it. The Jesus who appears is certainly not the Jesus of the Gospels, but we were not to expect that. Then what is the Jesus of this fiction? What a superb challenge to dramatic imagination Mr. Moore's own thesis offers! But where is it answered? Where does a compelling, gripping, dramatic sense of a vivid manhood in Jesus anywhere disengage itself from the grey, strange mistiness of the book's diffusive background, to possess and dominate our imagination? The early contacts of Joseph with Jesus are so fog-bound; the scenes after the "pseudo-resurrection" so blurred and attenuated; the experiences at the brook Kerith so fuddled and masked by discursive incident, that nowhere does the imagination of the reader actually kindle with the spell of a real drama of experience. Our own fate in reading may have been unique. We were bored and wearied where we expected to be aroused and enchanted by the spell of a genius stroke of masterful audacity.

The dramatic thesis of the story is this: The son of a Galilean carpenter, who spends all his early life as a shepherd among the Essenes of Kerith, suddenly is possessed with the conceit of Messiahship; he preaches his Messianic gospel with fanatical austerity, is misled by seeming miracle power to believe himself a Master among men, is crucified, is taken by Joseph of Arimathæa from the cross before life is extinct, to the latter's newly made sepulchre, and there resuscitated, after a convalescence of several weeks goes back to his shepherd life among the Essenes, there repents of the folly and sin of his Messiahship, and, meeting Paul there, at first feels impelled to persuade him of the falseness of the story of resurrection, but finally leaves the apostle undisturbed with his "error,"

though repenting afterward also of that weakness.

In these later days, the religion of Jesus becomes pure pantheistic determinism. The following passage from one of the most beautiful chapters may epitomize this:

"God is not here, nor there, but everywhere; in the flower, and in the star, and in the earth underfoot. . . . But shall we gather the universal will into an image and call it God? For by so doing do we not drift back to the starting point of all our misery? We again become the dupes of illusion and desire. . . . For God is but desire, and whoever yields to desire falls into sin. To be without sin we must be without God.

"Jesus stood before the door of the cenoby . . . asking himself if any man had dared to ask himself if God were not indeed the last uncleanliness of the mind."

Now, this has a strange sound; but into the lips of the world's transcendent Christ, the audacity of such writing is monumental. Yet with it goes much that is as exquisite poetry filled with the spirit of a true and valid mysticism, which if rationally comprehended leads to purer faith. And for our own part, we do not see how such a career as Mr. Moore has creatively imagined for the Man of Nazareth might not have been told wholesomely, winsomely, and inspiringly—whether it be true to historic facts or not. But we do not feel that George Moore has done this. His Jesus is neither human nor divine; it has not the passion of true drama; it lacks the convincingness of genuine personality. The painstaking realisms do not succeed in making the story real. We cannot convince ourselves that the thing done was worth the doing—though it might have been made splendidly worth while. As a failure, its audacity of affront on the cherished and tender faiths of the world as a whole is hardly pardonable.

G. H. B.

THE REVIEWS.

The Harvard Theological Review for October contains: "A Review of Italian Modernism," by Giorgio La Piana; "An Italian Modernist's Hope for the Future," by Roolo Murri; "The 'Son' as an Organ of Revelation," by Benjamin W. Bacon; and "Theology and Psychology," by James H. Leuba.

The Hibbert Journal for October contains, among other things, the following notable articles: "The Root of the Matter," (a discussion of the war situation from the Danish point of view), by Prof. J. P. Bang; "More German Sermons," by Prof. A. S. Ferguson; "The American Civil War and the Present War," by President Charles F. Thwing; "The Literary Method of the Fourth Gospel," by Rev. Walter Lock; "The Theology of Stopford Brooke," by Rev. J. Estin Carpenter; "Are We Happier than Our Forefathers?" by Charles A. Mercier, M. D.; "The Modernist Revival of Anglicanism," by Rev. Cavendish Moxom; "Assyria and Prussia; an Historical Parallel," by Prof. Lewis Bayles Paton; "The Distrust of the Intellect," by J. W. Scott; "Christian Internationalism," by Henry T. Hodgkin.

RETURN IN PRAYER.

The sated sinner comes again
Unto the Holy Place,
And meekly makes his peace with God
With downcast, humble face.
But all the Church will ask of him
To gain new life, new hope, and love,
And take his place again with men—
"Repent, and to your God above
Return in Prayer."

How soft are thy commands, O Church!
How easy to redeem
A life of vice and broken hearts
And win thy full esteem.
How good to find the open doors
To pastures new and paths untrod.
And in the bright light of new faith
To Great and Rediscovered God,
Return in Prayer.

But what of him who holds his course
Through Youth's uncertain flood,
And single-handed meets the force
Of surging, spring-time blood?
For if he fails, there is no faith—
He knows the right and what is wrong.
If his own shrine be stained with crime,
Then he will seek, but not for long
Return in Prayer.

[Percy Godfrey Savage.

MIDDLE STATES LETTER

NEW YORK CITY.

All Souls' Church.—This church resumed work on October 5th. The vacation season was prolonged a week because of the absence of Mr. Sullivan on the Pacific Coast. The work of the year is starting well. The Alliance committees are especially active. The Program Committee reported a program consisting of five lectures by Rev. William L. Sullivan on "The Reformation:"

November 1st—"Premonitions of the Reformation (1)."

December 6th—"Premonitions of the Reformation (2)."

January 3rd—"Luther, the Man and the Reformer."

February 7th—"The First Years of the Reformation."

March 7th—"The Counter Reformation."

The lectures begin at 11:30 a. m. They are peculiarly fitting, as 1917 is the four-hundredth anniversary of the Reformation.

The Cheerful Letter and Red Cross Committees are doing especially helpful work, and the Society for the Employment and Relief of Poor Women entered upon its seventy-third year of work on Thursday, November 2nd. The Sunday school will open November 19th, when we hope to have a year of increased numbers and strong teaching.

Church of the Messiah.—The Messiah Dramatic Circle, through its Messiah Players, is planning a busy winter. They are to give a revival of "The Wages of War," which was produced with such success last winter, and have just put into rehearsal Prof. Eleanor Wood Whitman's "The Story of the Prophet Isaiah," which was produced last summer with great success at the Isles of Shoals on the occasion of the summer session of the Free Religious Association. This drama of "Isaiah" is based on the Biblical story, and contains a large amount of Biblical material. It requires a brilliant production and a large cast. It will probably be given at the Church of the Messiah shortly after the Christmas holidays. It is a pacifist drama through and through. In addition to this work, the Players will give a production of some of the one-act dramas of W. W. Gibson, who is going to be in this country during the coming winter. And, most important of all, the Players are going to produce, on next Good Friday afternoon, John Masefield's poetic drama, "Good Friday." They are planning to make a big thing of this—will give the play in the church, and make it an occasion of great impressiveness.

The Messiah Social Service League is anticipating a very busy and profitable winter. The Sunday evening Forums, which are run under the auspices of the League, are now a permanent fixture in the church. The audiences at these Forum meetings are larger this year than they have ever been. Furthermore, the League is now conducting some neighborhood work on the lower East Side of New York, and is planning to extend this work as rapidly as possible.

On Sunday, November 19th, a new memorial window in memory of Mrs. Frances A. Hackley was dedicated. This window is No. 5 in the general series illustrating the history of prophetic religion, and depicts Savonarola before Lorenzo de Medici. This window is probably the most beautiful one that has yet been installed in the church.

The new associate minister, Rev. Harvey Dee Brown, is beginning his work most effectively, and is finding great favor with the people. He is proving himself an expert executive, and a fine preacher. The Messiah is immeasurably strengthened by his work and presence.

Lenox Avenue Church.—The sermon topics of Rev. Merle St. Croix Wright for October and November have been: "In the Beginning, God;" "The Religious Situation Today;" "A Social Diagnosis and Prescription;" "God's Athlete, Epictetus;" "A Plain Man's Religion;" "Indictments of Existence;" "Endorsements of Existence;" "The Founder of Modern Religion, Schleiermacher." The program of the Alliance for the year includes addresses on the following subjects: "The Missionary Trend in Liberal Religion," by Mrs. William M. Sullivan; "Are Women Comic?" by Miss Theresa Helburn; and four addresses by Dr. Wright on "Tagore's Poems," "Tagore's Plays

and Philosophy," "The Liberal Note in Modern Poetry," and "Roumanian Folk Songs."

BROOKLYN, N. Y.

Second Unitarian Church.—An unexpectedly promising field of neighborhood welfare work has been tapped by the formation of a Boy Scout troop in the Second Unitarian Church, Brooklyn. Mr. Lyttle arranged a demonstration for the members of the church in May, with the courteous aid of the troop of a near-by church; and during the summer the number of boys in our troop increased from ten to twenty-four—the limit—with a corresponding growth of enthusiasm. Camp Fire work for girls has also been started. Following the happy precedent of last year, an autumn supper and reunion was held, November 10th, with greetings from Rev. Harvey Dee Brown of the Church of the Messiah, Dr. Henry Neumann of the Brooklyn Ethical Culture Society, and others representing humanitarian interests allied with us. The church has actively interested itself in the formation of a dental clinic, for adults, in the vicinity; and the church school has opened in the same sipirit of cordial loyalty as before, with a steady inflow of new pupils. The Alliance program for the winter offers many interesting speakers. During the summer, the exterior of the quaint old edifice has been thoroughly renovated, and plans for interior changes are now under consideration.

NEWBURGH, N. Y.

One of the most gratifying things that have happened in the parish for a long time has been the entrance into Meadville Theological School of one of the young men—Henry Morrison by name—to prepare himself for our ministry.

Our church activities have started up with considerable interest. The Woman's Alliance has prepared a good program of meetings. We have adopted the plan of having some member responsible each month for planning some enterprise to make money. Our Alliance pays the organist's salary and the choir.

We have a newly organized Dramatic Club of young people. We read together modern plays, and also put on the stage three or four short plays during the year.

We have also just organized a Lend-a-Hand Club, in connection with one of the classes in our Sunday school.

Several important improvements have been made to Unity Hall, where we hold our social affairs. There we hold dances, old-fashioned sing-fests, concerts, and suppers in a merry procession.

We have a class in modern dancing, held regularly on Tuesday evenings, with a competent paid instructor in charge.

There is a spirit of sociability and harmony prevalent, and we are looking forward to a good year.

POUGHKEEPSIE, N. Y.

Our little company is small, but very earnest and wholly united.

Our Woman's Alliance last year helped in many good causes, besides raising a hundred dollars for the support of the church, and expects to do as much or more this year.

We have between sixty and seventy Unitarian girls in Vassar College this year. On a recent Saturday, the minister met thirty of them in Prof. Caroline Furness' room, for a visit of an hour and a short talk about liberal religion as a faith which young women should prize and love. A flashlight picture was taken of the group to send to the National Alliance.

Dr. Paul Revere Frothingham of Boston is to preach at the college soon on a Sunday morning, and has promised to preach at the Unitarian church in the evening.

Dr. Sunderland is preaching an extended series of evening sermons for the purpose of answering the inquiry, "What Is Unitarian Christianity, or What Is Modern Liberal Religion? or Great Faiths for Free Souls." The morning sermons for January and part of February will be a series dealing with the "Great Friends"—George Fox and William Penn, Elizabeth Fry and John Bright, John Woolman and Elias Hicks, Lucretia Mott and Benjamin Trueblood, Bayard Taylor and John Greenleaf Whittier—an appropriate series for a liberal church which is worshiping in

the Friends' Meeting House. The series to follow this one will deal with India, its civilization and its religions, its modern movements and leaders, including Tagore.

SCHENECTADY, N. Y.

Rev. Addison Moore, D. D., has announced several interesting series of Sunday evening lectures—all except the last, of three lectures each: "The Three Godfathers of Christianity," "Inequality of Human Races," "The Struggle Between Science and Superstition," "American Ideals," "Morals of Great Nations Evidenced by Their Literature." The three godfathers of Christianity are Bel-Marduk of Babylon, originator of the idea of sin and a saviour; Amon-Ra of Egypt, originator of the idea of a judgment day; and Jehovah of Canaan, heir of Amon-Ra and Bel-Marduk.

TRENTON, N. J.

Trenton reports steady progress, with well-sustained congregations throughout the past month. But there is little real news to report. We have been somewhat delayed in some of our plans, owing to the continued paralysis quarantine, which has only this last week been removed. This has hindered any attempt at Sunday school organization. The Woman's Alliance has also been somewhat delayed in getting into swing, owing to the continued absence of the President, who has not yet returned from Maine.

A regular fortnightly social gathering has been established at the minister's home, and is proving quite a success.

Mr. Reeman's sermon topics have included ones suited to explain the liberal point of view to a community to which it is new: "What Higher Criticism Is Driving At;" "Prayer and Common Sense;" "The Horrible Inhumanity of Hell;" "How Shall We Think of God Today?" "What Is the Truth About Human Nature?" "Jesus—How Shall We Think of Him, As God or Man?" Other sermons have dealt with the great themes of the day: "The Spiritual Effects of War;" "George Bernard Shaw and Christianity;" "The Research Magnificent;" "The Challenge of Democracy;" "Mr. Britling Sees It Through."

LANCASTER, PA.

On Thursday, November 9th, Rev. Charles Reidel was installed as the successor of Rev. E. H. Reeman. The sermon was given by Rev. William L. Sullivan, the charge of the minister and the right hand of fellowship by Rev. James A. Fairley, the charge to the people by Mr. Reeman, and the welcome to the church and city by Mr. M. T. Garvin.

ELIZABETH, N. J.

There is little of telegraphic importance. All auxiliaries have resumed work. The society held its annual meeting on October 25th. Evening services began on October 22nd, to be continued through the winter. The minister's opening topics dealt with "Our New Knowledge of the Past"—as follows: "Man Before Adam;" "The World Before the Flood;" "The Human Gods of Our Ancestors;" "World Teachers Before Jesus;" the addresses dealing with some of the late revolutionary discoveries in the fields of anthropology, archæology, etc. Later topics will take up: "The Origin of Christianity," "The Passing of the Old Gods," etc. Other courses on modern teachers and liberal prophets of the nineteenth century will follow during the winter. The Tuesday Night Club, which is the educational arm of the church, will take up the coming winter, "The Making of American Civilization."

ERIE, PA.

Rev. Wilson M. Backus, who recently completed a successful pastorate of seven years at Minneapolis and who for five years previous was Secretary of the Western Conference, has accepted a call to become pastor of the Unitarian Church at Erie, Pa. The many friends of Mr. Backus will be glad to know that his health and strength are sufficiently restored to enable him to accept this call. The Erie church is very happy in its anticipation of his leadership.

There are multitudes in our congregations who are just *waiting* while they ought to be *acting*. They must work, if they would have God work in them. There can be no religion without obedience.—[ICHABOD SPENCER.

WESTERN CONFERENCE NEWS

Ohio.

The most significant news from Ohio is that the Dayton church has at last found its leader in Rev. John Morris Evans, who took charge of the work on the second Sunday in November. Mr. Evans is of Welsh parentage, but his childhood and youth were passed in this country. His school training was partly at Bucknell University at Lewisburg, Pa., and partly at Oxford University in England. He was ordained in the Baptist ministry, and served Baptist churches at Builth Wells, Breckonshire, and at Abertillery, Monmouthshire. At this latter point, the church developed wide intellectual and social activities which eventually resulted in a separate organization, known as "The New Era Union." The work here was so strenuous that after some years Mr. Evans was obliged to give up active work and take a period of rest. After a short attendance at the Theological Seminary at Rochester, N. Y., he accepted the pastorate of the Baptist church at Lowville, N. Y. He has visited many European countries, as well as Egypt and India. He begins his work at Dayton under the happiest auspices, the desire for his leadership on the part of the people being unanimous.

Michigan.

The Michigan Unitarian Conference held its forty-first meeting at Kalamazoo on Tuesday afternoon and evening and Wednesday morning, October 31st and November 1st. As has now become the custom, the meeting was a "Twenty-four Hour Conference," it having been found that one night away from home suits all delegates much better than the former two- or three-day meetings. Also, as is customary now in Michigan, the Associate Alliance of the state is responsible for one-third of the program, under the efficient leadership of Mrs. E. L. Fuller of Jackson, the President. Mrs. Frederick Holt of Detroit gave a most interesting account of her experience on the Ford peace ship; the purpose and the ideals of the Alliance were presented by Mrs. Scheble of Toledo and Mrs. Cushman of Detroit; and Mrs. C. S. Atherton, the Recording National Secretary, who had made a special effort to be present, was warmly welcomed and her encouraging words much appreciated.

On Tuesday afternoon, Rev. E. R. Shippen spoke on "Our Revival Experience," pointing out the danger of cheapening and vulgarizing religion which came alongside of any good the "Billy Sunday" revival might happen to do. The discussion was opened by Secretary Smith of Chicago, and almost all the ministers present added their word. On Tuesday evening, a platform meeting with the subject, "A World-Wide View of Religion," was held. Rev. F. C. Aldinger, President of the Michigan Universalist Convention, spoke on "Interdenominational Cooperation," and asked what right liberals have to complain of the divisions within religion and the lack of unified work, when they themselves do so little to come together. Rev. F. C. Gauld of Toledo pointed out how the conditions of trade to follow the war made a cultivation of "The International Spirit" more necessary than ever, if there was to be any reasonable hope of permanent world peace. Rev. D. Roy Freeman of Grand Rapids, speaking on "Universal Religion," tried to identify Christianity either with Tolstoy's type of the simple life, or with the rigid creeds of orthodoxy, both of which he would reject. Since Christianity could to him mean only the most formal and extreme type of Christianity, he thought all modern thinking men should reject the name and press on and above the position of any single world religion to the higher position of a "Universal Religion." Coming at the end of the evening, there was no time for discussion, but the opinion seemed to be prevalent that a broader interpretation of Christianity might be possible, and that if a man could not have considerable affection for that limited form of religion he had seen, how could he love that world religion which as yet nobody has ever seen? Yet there is undoubtedly a tendency among Unitarians at present to exaggerate the Christian elements in their religion, which seems to arise more from motives of interdenominational policy than from fearless and accurate scholarship. Rev. Caroline Bartlett Crane presided over

the evening meeting, and closed with a few words which were in themselves a benediction.

Governor Ferris was elected President, Rev. D. Roy Freeman, Vice-President, and Rev. F. C. Gauld, Secretary and Treasurer. The Directors are Rev. George F. Patterson, Mrs. Frederick Holt, Mrs. E. L. Fuller and Rev. R. S. Loring. The attendance was good, and the hospitality of the Kalamazoo church even better. The next place of meeting will probably be Toledo.

ILLINOIS AND WISCONSIN.

Last spring, the Directors of the Western Unitarian Conference organized several District Missionary Committees, Illinois and Wisconsin forming one of the districts. The Missionary Committee, after a careful study of conditions, decided that our general cause could be best advanced in the district by strengthening and extending the influence of our churches in the two largest cities of the district—Chicago and Milwaukee. A definite campaign has been under way at Milwaukee since the opening of the church in the fall. A meeting of the ministers and trustees of the churches in and near Chicago and of the Milwaukee church was held at the City Club in Chicago on October 26th. While there were differences of opinion, both with regard to method and with regard to purpose, a sufficient degree of cooperation was pledged to warrant the committee in proceeding with its project, and it now sends out the following call for helpful information:

"The Western Unitarian Conference, through its standing committee for Illinois and Wisconsin, has in hand a project to do for Unitarianism in Chicago and in Milwaukee a service similar to that which has reenergized our churches in several Eastern cities.

"As a preparation for meetings soon to be held in local churches, as well as at some central point, the committee is desirous of securing the names and addresses of persons in or near Milwaukee and Chicago who are not identified with our churches in those places, but who are likely to be interested in a modern and constructive presentation of religion. Readers of THE UNITARIAN ADVANCE who have knowledge of such persons are earnestly requested to send names and addresses to the Secretary of this committee. They may thus help greatly in the advancement of our cause in these cities.

"WALTER F. GREENMAN,
"ALBERT R. VAIL,
"ERNEST C. SMITH,
"Secretary.
"105 S. Dearborn St., Chicago."

IOWA.

The Davenport calendar for November gives the following sermon topics: "The Disappearance of the Individual;" "Ultimate Values;" "Rivers of Life," by Rev. William L. McKinney of Geneseo, Ill.; "The Function of the Minister." The Study Class is taking up the "Poem of Job." This seems to be in preparation for a lecture by Edward Howard Griggs on the same topic in his University Extension course on "The Dramas of Protest." The reverse side of the calendar contains Prof. Carruth's noble poem, "Each in His Own Tongue."

The calendar for Iowa City shows the following sermon subjects: "Why Study the Bible?" "God Is Not Mocked," "Are the Unfortunate Unfit?" "The Brook Kerith." At the Sunday evening meetings of the Young People's Society, Prof. P. S. Peirce will speak on "Employers' Welfare Work;" Dr. Sudhindra Bose on "American Ways as They Appear to an Oriental;" Dr. Benjamin Kramer on "The Sanitary Problems of a Large City;" and on December 3rd a Thanksgiving program will be rendered. On November 21st, at the Men's Club supper, Mr. A. B. Gilbert speaks on "The Tom Johnson Regime in Cleveland."

As heretofore mentioned in these columns, Rev. Charles C. Williams was invited, early in September, to become the minister of the Humboldt church for an indefinite pastorate. This call was accepted, and Mr. Williams began his pastorate on the 24th of September. He comes to our Unitarian ranks from the Congregational church, his last pastorate having been with the church of that denomination at Eldon, Iowa. On coming to us, he was admitted to fellowship in the Unitarian faith. He has now given us some two months of vigorous service, and has all the activities of the church well organized. The pews are well filled

from Sunday to Sunday with very attentive listeners. Among the sermon subjects upon which he has preached are the following: "The Growth of Character;" "Supremacy of Christ;" "The Call of Life;" "The Greatest Force in Civilization;" "Man's Conception of God;" "God's Messages to Man." The spiritual life of the church has been quickened by the earnestness, fervor, and consecrated service of our new minister, bespeaking a successful pastorate. Our Unity Club has organized for a season's work along civic lines, using as a basis the periodical, entitled, "Studies in Social Progress," published by the American Institute of Social Science. We have prospects for an interesting and profitable season's work in these studies. Mr. Williams is also giving a course of Sunday evening lectures, with a view to an exposition of the underlying tenets of Unitarianism. This course is designed especially to familiarize those of an inquiring mind with the belief of Unitarians, in the hope that some mistaken ideas may be corrected. The Ladies' Circle is busy preparing for its annual fair, to be held shortly before Thanksgiving.

At Des Moines, the work of the year in all departments is in full swing. The pastor, Rev. C. W. Reese, after an investigation of housing conditions in Des Moines and a report on these before the Unity Circle, found that there was a surprising interest in the question and in his suggestions for meeting the condition which he set forth.

At Sioux City, the organization of an orchestra in connection with the Sunday school is one means by which it is hoped to still further increase the growing attendance and interest in the work of the school. Beginning October 1st, the time of meeting of the Forum was changed from the Sunday school hour following the morning service to 7 o'clock p. m., and now constitutes the evening service. This enables workers to help with the Sunday school and still enjoy the excellent discussions afforded by the Forum. Among the interesting addresses before the Forum have been Mr. E. C. Wolcott's account of "Living Conditions with the Troops on the Mexican Border;" Miss Dorothy Eaton's "Story of the Life and Ideals in an Eastern College for Women;" and Mr. A. O. Wakefield's presentation of "The Actual Procedure in Congress." Each address is always followed by discussion.

At the Union Church at Griswold, the sermon topics for November have been: "Is the Christianity of Today Christian?" "What Is Salvation?" "How to Obtain or Attain to Salvation;" "Am I My Brother's Keeper?" The Sunday school is continuing its regular work, and the recently formed Young People's Union meets on alternate Sunday evenings. The Ladies' Union continues to be a tower of strength to the church. This organization will conduct an annual bazaar and supper on Saturday, December 2nd.

NEBRASKA.

The issuance of *An Open Door,* the monthly journal of All Souls' Church, Lincoln, was interrupted for a considerable period by the absence of the minister, Rev. A. L. Weatherly, with the Ford Peace Expedition. Its regular publication was resumed with the November issue. The most notable event for the month of November was the presence of Rev. Charles F. Dole of Boston for a period of nearly a week. On November 5th, Mr. Dole preached on "Life at Its Best," addressed the Social Ethical Class on "Patriotism and Something More," and preached again in the evening on "The New Age Before the Church." On Monday evening, he spoke particularly to the young people on "What Chances for Leadership of Men?" On Tuesday noon, he spoke to the Lincoln Social Service Club upon "The Business of Life," and on the same evening, at the home of the minister, on "The Experience of Religion." On Wednesday, he addressed the Woman's Alliance on "Our Message—The New Emphasis," and in the evening spoke to the Men's Club, his subject being "Democracy on Trial." On Thursday, he addressed a convocation at the State University on "A Liberal Education for Everyone." Prof. Paul H. Grummann is to give a course of four lectures on "Ibsen," for the benefit of the organ fund. The dramas considered will be: "Ghosts;" "An Enemy of the People;" "A Doll's House;" "The Lady from the Sea;" "Hedda Gabler;" "Master Build-

ers;" "John Gabriel Borkmann;" "When the Dead Awake."

KANSAS.

At Wichita, a series of revival meetings, involving the cooperation of some forty churches, have been conducted by Rev. Bulgin. As is usually the case, his extreme statements and his occasional attacks upon Unitarians have helped to a clearer distinction between the Evangelical and the Unitarian position. Our minister, Mr. Birkhead, is preaching both morning and evening, and selecting subjects which have special reference to making clear our position upon many of the points raised by the evangelist. Goodly congregations are the rule. During the month of November, the church was visited by Rev. William Channing Brown, Field Agent of the American Unitarian Association, and by Rev. Ernest C. Smith, Secretary of the Western Unitarian Conference, who gave an address to the Alliance, an illustrated lecture on "Glacier National Park," and a talk on "Hopeful Conditions Within the Conference Limits."

The church at Lawrence was favored by a visit from Dr. Charles F. Dole of Boston, who preached morning and evening of October 29th, and gave a series of addresses during the week. Mr. Smith, Secretary of the Western Conference, gave an address on "The Unitarian Idea of Prayer" on Sunday evening, November 12th. He also spoke to a group of young people and preached at Haskell Institute in the afternoon. A series of Sunday evening meetings, setting forth the Unitarian attitude on a number of great themes, is being maintained. A group of young people who have grown up in the Sunday school have achieved organization, and meet before the Sunday evening service.

MISSOURI.

At the Kansas City church, the audiences are fifty per cent larger this fall than at corresponding periods in the two preceding years. Twenty-five new members have been added to the church within a year. Nine hundred pamphlet sermons were taken from the racks within a year. An attractive sign with changeable letters has been erected at the front edge of the church lot by the Cross Stone Club. A permanent sign properly mounted, giving the location of the church, the hours of service, and the name and address of the minister, has been erected on the main thoroughfare, one block from the church. This has long been needed, and promises to be a real advantage to the church. The attendance at the Alliance meetings has considerably increased, and a Junior Alliance of twelve members has been formed and is doing excellent work. Rev. Ernest C. Smith, Secretary of the Western Conference, gave an illustrated lecture upon "Glacier National Park," following the supper on Friday evening, November 10th. He also preached to a good audience on the following Sunday morning. It is of interest that the number of small subscribers to the support of the church is slowly increasing.

At the Church of the Messiah, St. Louis, the Alliance has arranged a program which deals with "Leaders of Reform Movements in Religion." The lectures dealt with include the following: "Savonarola;" "John Wycliffe;" "Martin Luther;" "Zwingli;" "John Wesley;" "William Ellery Channing;" "Theodore Parker." In the October calendar, Dr. Day urged the special study of "Unitarian Teaching," and gave a list of dates at which appeals for the support of different denominational undertakings will be made. Provision has been made for a kindergarten class on Sunday mornings during the hour of church service. A room has been set apart, and a trained kindergarten teacher has been engaged to conduct the exercises for the children during the hour of service. This will give an opportunity to parents who have hitherto been unable to do so to attend church. The Sunday school meets at 9:45 a. m. and is properly graded.

Satisfaction, even after one has dined well, is not so interesting and eager a feeling as hunger.—[SARAH ORNE JEWETT.

No man can be truly religious who believes in the God of yesterday or rests in the God of today. There is no salvation save in the God of tomorrow.—[HENRY D. LLOYD.

SOUTHERN CONFERENCE NOTES

New Orleans.

The New Orleans church opened its fall services the first Sunday in October with Mr. Kent in his pulpit, fresh from vacation days spent at his summer home on Cape Cod. The congregation was deeply saddened by the very recent death of Prof. Henry F. Rugan of Tulane University, who for years had been a faithful and beloved member of the New Orleans Church, and on its Board of Trustees and Superintendent of its Sunday school. This opening service in October was therefore made partly one of "Memoriam" for Prof. Rugan by the pastor.

The Church Welfare Committee has held several meetings to outline and plan for the coming year's work, and several movements are in the embryo state and will be heard from later.

The Branch Alliance has opened its business meetings and looks forward hopefully. The first meeting is always an "experience meeting," when members tell how they earned the dollar or dollars they bring to the treasury as the result of some summer work. The sum of nearly one hundred dollars was raised in this way at the October meeting. Later in the month, the Branch held a reception for the congregation and new members. What is perhaps the most interesting thing of all (because most unusual) is the fact that the Branch did not take a vacation this year when the church closed —but met every week and read aloud and studied *The History of the Alliance*—written by Mrs. Fifield and her daughter, Mrs. Mary Fifield King.

These summer morning meetings were held by invitation at the residences of members who remained in the city part of the summer. The meetings were devoted to social pleasure and the interesting reading of Mrs. Fifield's work, acquainting us with the early beginnings of the National Alliance and its Branches.

Those who attended these meetings will find the coming winter's Alliance work more interesting, and better understood and appreciated than ever before, due to information gathered at these readings. A ten-cent "silver offering" was collected at each meeting, thereby adding several dollars to the Branch treasury. The winter's meetings will begin with a luncheon, followed by a business session, and at 3 p. m. the study class meeting, which offers this year a series of interesting papers upon "Liberal Religion in Foreign Countries—Holland, Russia, Hungary, Poland, India, Italy, France, etc."

The Church Publicity Committee has had neat boxes made, just large enough to hold about twenty-five A. U. A. tracts, and has succeeded in placing several of these in rest rooms and railway stations, where people may pass their "waiting time" reading some of our good literature.

The Sunday school has changed its former afternoon hour to 9:45 a. m., and starts out with such a fine beginning that a very successful Sunday school year is looked forward to.

Mr. Kent and Mr. Conkling of the Atlanta church will exchange pulpits for two Sundays in November. Mr. Conkling has visited New Orleans before, and will again be a welcome guest among us. It would be a wonderful help to our Southern pastors if they could have the pleasure of just such exchanges occasionally.

H. W. C.

Dallas, Tex.

First Unitarian Church—At the end of the summer recess, the members lost from their midst the valued presence of one who has been part and parcel of the Unitarian movement in this city from its very origin—Mr. C. R. Buddy—loved for his genial personality and ever-helpful friendliness. We have lost another coworker in the death of Mrs. Walker, and again another in the sudden passing of Judge W. A. Bonner. Other homes have been touched by sorrow, so that it was a saddened group that assembled this fall for the new year of work. However, with the brave and inspiring words of our pastor in a series of six sermons, entitled, "No Refuge but in Truth," we are spurred on to fresh endeavor.

Mr. Gilmour has spoken of the need of developing the spirit of good will in ourselves and in others, and of apply-

ing plain morality in the affairs of the citizen and of the city. "Honesty," he says, "is of itself a creed. It is the social cement, the unifying force, which, if applied to the conduct of the individual and of society, would achieve social reform, progress, and success. There should be no compromise in matters of the soul. Keep that part of our being sacred. The death of the soul is inevitable for him who tampers with his conscience. 'To thy own self be true'."

The year's work of the Alliance commenced with an "all-day sewing." This business meeting was so largely attended and so pleasant an occasion, it was voted to hold future business meetings in a like manner. The members came to the Alliance room at 11, bringing lunch and needlework. At noon, the basket lunch was served. Mrs. Fred Thompson, a former Alliance President, and Mr. Gilmour were honor guests at our table. Members engaged in business in town joined us. The business meeting was held at 1:30; reports were read, and the following plans were formulated. There will be four regular suppers and two cafeteria suppers given. A Christmas bazaar will be held the first Wednesday in December. The program for the social meetings will include readings from Dickens and the Modern Drama by Mrs. Georgia Stenger, also two musical afternoons. The October social meeting was held at the home of Mrs. J. L. Furneaux. A delightful afternoon was spent "'mongst friends." Mrs. Stenger presented the amusing French comedy, "The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife," (translated by Anatole France).

The Dramatic Society has organized for the season with efficient officers. The Y. P. R. U. held 5 o'clock vespers on November 5th. Mrs. Thompson and Mr. Kreissig lent their aid to this beautiful service. Mr. Anthony Geevers gave an address on "Generosity."

ISABEL STICKNEY SPAULDING.

CHARLESTON, S. C.

A new Austin organ has just been installed in the church, and its beautiful tones seem to complete the inspiration we get of the services.

A series of free organ recitals is being held on Sunday afternoons by the various organists of the city, and at an early day there is to be a recital by Professor Theo. Saul of New York City, for which tickets will be sold at a nominal price, in order to defray expenses on that occasion.

The minister, Rev. Clifton M. Gray, has been preaching some fine sermons, which have roused the members to greater efforts.

The Helping Hands Branch of the Alliance are going to help with the choir furnishings and lights, and are also working for a sale, which they hope to hold in the late winter.

The Ladies' Social Sewing Society is going to have a sale on December 12th at the Parish Hall. There will be a table with articles of all kinds, useful, fancy, and edible, priced from five cents to twenty-five cents, besides other tables with more expensive gifts for Christmas. The President has recently appointed a Publicity Committee, whose duty it is to keep the church before the public, and report anything of interest to the *Christian Register*. Each member of the society was given a small amount of cash, which she must increase and the full report of which will be called for on February 1st.

As usual, this society will work to contribute substantial aid to the current expenses of the church, as well as help defray the expenses incident to the organ recitals.

MARY WINTHROP GIBBON,
For Publicity Committee.

SAN ANTONIO, TEX.

The work immediately on hand for our people in San Antonio is the raising of funds for a church building, which is imperatively needed. The Woman's Alliance has especially interested itself in this enterprise, and the ladies are all devising ways and means for augmenting the fund. The girls of the Junior Alliance recently held a cake sale for this purpose, and a very attractive entertainment was later held at the residence of Mrs. Bernard Mackensen to help the good work on.

Mr. Badger is preaching a series of sermons on "Why Not Be Honest About Religion?"

Three meetings of the Men's Liberal Club have been held this season; at the first, the President spoke on "The Fine Art of Hearing the Other Side;" at the second, Mr. Paul S. Law, who for several years lived in Mexico City, and was present at the downfall of Madero, spoke on "What About Mexico"—a most interesting theme, of course, which drew an unusually large attendance; at the last meeting, Mr. G. S. Le Stourgeon opened an animated discussion on "City Management."

The opening of a new season has brought us some new friends, and we are especially glad for the presence with us of several families from northern Unitarian churches, who are here for the winter.

Oklahoma City, Okla.

The best news from Oklahoma City is of the dedication of the church building purchased by the American Unitarian Association for the society last spring. During the summer an addition was built, providing social rooms, and an inspiring service of dedication was held on November 5th, with a sermon by Rev. Ernest C. Smith, Secretary of the Western Unitarian Conference, and an address by Rev. W. C. Brown, representing the American Unitarian Association.

During the second week in October, a unique and most interesting series of meetings was conducted by Rev. Leon M. Birkhead, minister of our church in Wichita, Kans., with addresses every evening in the week on "Religion for the Modern World."

AN APPEAL.

To my Fellow Unitarians:

In a public statement recently issued, the Secretary of our General Conference, Rev. Walter F. Greenman of Milwaukee, has announced that the next session of the Conference will be held with the Church of the Messiah in Montreal, Canada, September 25 to 28, 1917.

The session thus announced should be the most notable ever held in the history of our denomination. For the first time, the Conference will assemble outside the borders of the United States. The date of meeting marks at once the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Church of the Messiah, the oldest Unitarian church in the Dominion, and the one hundredth anniversary of the Rush-Bagot agreement between the United States and Canada, by which the common frontiers of the two countries were stripped forever of the menace of "fortifications or other signs of hostility and distrust." This date may mark as well a fateful hour of war or peace for the British Empire on whose hospitable soil we shall gather, and for all those higher and nobler interests of civilization which our church is so singly set to serve.

Deeply sensible of the cordiality and significance of the invitation from the church in Montreal, inspired by the assurance of support already received in abundant measure from minister and people, stirred by the precious memories of the past and challenged by the momentous possibilities of the not distant future, the Council has solemnly set itself to the task of making this next session of the Conference in all ways worthy of its great occasion. Announcements of meetings, speakers, traveling arrangements, etc., will be issued in due season. Meanwhile, appeal is herewith made to our fellow Unitarians everywhere in the United States and Canada to heed this statement, and to make plans forthwith to be present at this first international assembly of our Conference forces. Never was there a better time for strengthening the bonds that hold together two alien but friendly peoples. Never was there a nobler opportunity for the proclamation to the world of our gospel of freedom, justice, and good will among men. Never was there a greater need in all our hearts for the reinforcement of our faith in God, our hope of his Kingdom, and our love for all his children.

We are a little company, my brethren. Ours is a feeble voice in a tumultuous time. But by the power of the spirit shall we be judged; and if we will, this meeting-day may be to us, and to the world, as a new-born Day of Pentecost.

John Haynes Holmes,

Chairman of the Council of the General Conference of Unitarian and other Christian Churches.

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For the religion of the spirit, as distinguished from the religion of authority, whether of pope or book, of priest or synod. They accept "truth for authority, not authority for truth," and believe in the never ceasing revelation of God to man in all lands and ages.

For freedom of thought and word, believing that freedom and truth go ever hand in hand. Therefore they do not attempt to prescribe the belief of either their ministers or their laymen, nor do they fear diversity of opinion as incompatible with unity of spirit.

For the fuller realization of the divine in the universe and in the heart of man. They believe that God is Infinite Spirit, the source of all life and truth, and that something of the nature of God may be apprehended by study of humanity, and of the world about us.

For belief in the divine humanity of Jesus, because they hold that all souls are children of the Infinite Spirit, and that the divine sonship is a universal manifestation, not a unique phenomenon.

For civic reform, economic justice, and social regeneration, believing that the mission of the church is now and here to establish the divine commonwealth of love and peace on earth.

For eternal life—not merely another life of blissful ease, which we shall discover beyond the grave; but life which already lays hold upon immortality because it is even now in harmony with God's divine order.